

**Town of Easton – Annual Town Meeting
MINUTES**

April 26, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

Samuel Staples Elementary School, 515 Morehouse Road, Easton

Present:

David Bindelglass, First Selectman
Kristi Sogofsky, Selectman

Robert Lessler, Selectman
Christine Halloran, Town Clerk

Presenters and Attendees:

Andrew Kachele, Chair, Board of Finance
Jon Stinson, Chair, Board of Education
Todd Johnston, Chair, Region 9 Board of Education
Ed Nagy, Director, Public Works Department
Elaine, O’Keefe, Member, Easton Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (EDIT)

About 34 Easton residents, 12 officials, 6 board members and 16 residents at large in attendance. Meeting livestream available on Facebook and Zoom with over 125 total livestream viewers. Recording available at <https://www.facebook.com/EastonCTBOS/videos/160462182650793>.

Registrars of Voters checked-in attendees with identification at entrance.

David Bindelglass convened the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

The Town Clerk read the call of the meeting.

The First Selectman commented that in honor of the late former First Selectman, Bill Kupinse, the Town would create an official Town gavel to commemorate his service to the Town of Easton.

The First Selectman asked for a motion to nominate a Moderator. Paul Lindoerfer nominated Maureen Williams. No further nominations. The motion was seconded. The nomination was approved by voice vote.

The moderator stated ground rules for the meeting including a three (3) minute comment per person per turn allowing for additional turns for comment. The Moderator stated meeting would be hybrid format per the Executive Orders 7B and 7L as amended. The moderator called for official comments for Agenda items.

- 1. Discussion of the proposed Annual Town Budget of \$46,249,385 for fiscal year 2021-2022 as recommended by the Board of Finance. The Board of Selectmen on April 22, 2021 voted, pursuant to Section 7-7 of the General Statutes, to submit the 2021-2022 budget in the amount of**

\$46,249,385 as recommended by the Board of Finance, to a machine vote. The budget will be discussed at the Annual Town Meeting, but will not be subject to any motions.

Presentation by Board of Finance.

Presentation by Board of Education.

Presentation by Region 9.

The Moderator called for presentations (available to view on Town of Easton website <https://www.eastonct.gov/town-meeting/agenda/annual-town-meeting-april-26-2021-agenda-and-information-updated-with-links-to>). Andrew Kachele, Chair of the Board of Finance summarized the presentation for the budget proposal for FY 2021/2022. Jon Stinson, Chair of the Easton Board of Education, summarized the presentation for the Final Board of Education 2021-2022 School Year Budget. Todd Johnston, Chair of the Region 9 Board of Education, summarized the presentation for the Region 9 2021-2022 Budget Presentation. The Moderator called for discussion. Residents commented. The Moderator called for any questions or comments after each presentation. Residents commented. The Moderator indicated that the item would go to a machine vote.

2. Acceptance of the five-year capital project plan.

Andrew Kachele, Chair of the Board of Finance, presented the five-year capital plan. Residents commented. The Moderator called for a motion to vote on acceptance of the five-year capital project plan. David Bindelglass moved. The motion was seconded. The Moderator requested that all in favor say “aye” and all not in favor say “no.” Motion carried by voice vote. The five-year capital plan was approved.

3. Set July 1, 2021 - January 2, 2022 for the 2020 Grand List bills.

The Moderator noted that there was no presenter for this item and called for a motion to set July 1, 2021 and January 2, 2022 for the 2020 grand list bills. Robert Lessler moved. The motion was seconded. The Moderator requested that all in favor say “aye” and all not in favor say “no.” Motion carried by voice vote. The dates for the grand list bills as set out in the motion were adopted.

4. Approve a special appropriation for the Judd Road bridge replacement in the amount of \$75,000 for the town’s 50% share of the estimated cost of engineering design.

The Moderator called for official comments from Ed Nagy, Public Works Director. The Moderator called for discussion. With no discussion or comments, the Moderator called for a motion to approve the special appropriation. Paul Lindoerfer moved. The motion was seconded. The Moderator called for any other discussion. With no additional comments, the Moderator requested that all in favor say “aye” and all not in favor say “no.” Motion carried by voice vote. The special appropriation was approved.

5. Approve a special appropriation for the Valley Road bridge replacement in the amount of \$150,000 for the estimated cost of engineering design.

The Moderator called for official comments from Ed Nagy, Public Works Director. The Moderator called for discussion. With no discussion or comments, the Moderator called for a motion to approve the special appropriation. Christine Calvert moved. The motion was seconded. The Moderator called for any other discussion. With no additional comments, the Moderator requested that all in favor say “aye” and all not in favor say “no.” Motion carried by voice vote. The special appropriation was approved.

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6. Discussion of the Easton Resolution on Racism and Public Health.

The Moderator called for comments from Elaine O’Keefe, member of the Easton Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (EDIT). The Easton Resolution on Racism and Public Health was passed by the Board of Selectmen (BOS) in August 2020 and later rescinded to allow broader input from citizens. The content of the resolution, referred to the Town referendum for vote on 5/4/21, is on the Town website. It states “The BOS of Easton acknowledge that racism is a *growing public health concern affecting our town and all of CT*” and avows to support action at all levels, local, state and national, including promoting racial and health equity in policies and enhancing educational efforts about racism and its harmful effects. Based on the outcome of the referendum, the Town might be advised to revisit the language, considering additional input from residents about specific actions that Easton should undertake, modify the resolution accordingly, and identify follow-up actions. The Moderator called for discussion. Residents commented. Kristi Sogofsky, Selectman, read the ballot question for this agenda item and the full text of the Easton Resolution on Racism and Public Health which is located on the town website. Residents commented. With no further discussion or comments, the Moderator indicated that the item would go to a machine vote.

Adjournment of the Annual Town Meeting to a machine vote to be held on Tuesday, May 4, 2021, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Samuel Staples Elementary School to vote on the Annual Budget for 2021-2022 and the Easton Resolution on Racism and Public Health.

The Moderator adjourned the Town Meeting to a machine vote to be held on Tuesday, May 4, 2021, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Samuel Staples Elementary School to vote on agenda items #1 and #6. No further discussion or public comment. The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Submitted by,
Christine Halloran, CCTC, CMC
Easton Town Clerk